



Ken Greene receives his first Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine at the second mass vaccination clinic Feb. 4 in the Hughes Fieldhouse. Mosaic Medical Center- Maryville, Nodaway County Health Department and the University plan to hold a third vaccination clinic Feb. 11.

THINGS ARE GETTING BETTER

MADELINE MAPES Assistant News Editor | @MadelineDMapes

More than 2,800 Nodaway County residents have received their first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine, according to Missouri's COVID-19 Dashboard, as of Feb. 8. In total, 3,213 doses of COVID-19 vaccines have been administered, 2,848 of those being first doses.

President of Mosaic Medical Center Nate Blackford said the hospital has vaccinated 1,748 residents at the last two mass COVID-19 vaccination clinics and hopes to hold a third event this Thursday, Feb. 11.

The seven-day rolling average of new positive COVID-19 cases as of Feb. 4 — the latest available data at the time of publi-

The coronavirus seems to be losing hold: no new cases, 10% vaccinated

cation — is 2. The county had no new cases for a two-day spurt Feb. 7-8, the latest available data at time of publication. This is the second time there has been two consecutive days with no new cases — the first time being Jan. 30-31.

Despite roughly 10% of the county having been vaccinated and the county hitting its first all time low since spiking in Novem-

ber 2020, Blackford said the community still has a long way to go before the community reaches immunity standards.

“The combination of those who naturally have the antibodies and those who have the vaccination — you need between the 50, 60, 70% ... to get to herd immunity,” Blackford said.

According to the Cleveland Clinic in Cleveland, Ohio, the estimated percentage of people who need to be vaccinated to reach immunity is between 50- 80%.

Blackford said Mosaic - Maryville is expecting a shipment Feb. 9 of 300 to 500 Moderna vaccines.

SEE COVID-19 | A4

Public Safety to split into two departments

MADELINE MAPES Assistant News Editor | @MadelineDMapes

Maryville Public Safety is splitting into two separate departments — police and fire — after a Jan. 26 unanimous Maryville City Council vote.

Maryville Fire Department Chief Phil Rickabaugh explained the shift will not affect the oper-

ation of either the fire department or the police department, but rather how they interact with the city council and city manager.

Maryville Police Department Chief Ron Christian said this transition will allow both departments to better focus on their specific jobs.

“I think both disciplines have an increasing level of training and

expectations put on them,” Christian said. “I think this will allow us to hopefully fine-tune and maybe hone our respective skills.”

Christian noted that he and Rickabaugh have worked together for all 36 years that both of them have worked in Maryville Public Safety. He noted that the two walked in to do their job interviews

together and have formed a friendship over time.

He said the friendship has allowed them to support one another, and he hopes that their bond will help keep the transition smooth from divisions to separate departments.

SEE MPS | A4

SEE COUNCIL | A4

Jasinski in running for Mankato presidency

ANDREW WEGLEY Managing Editor | @andrewwegley

The tenure of John Jasinski, who has served as Northwest's president since 2009, could soon be over. The 10th president in the University's 115-year history is one of four finalists to replace the departing president at Minnesota State University, who is set to retire at the end of the academic year, according to MSU-Mankato's website.

If selected, Jasinski would replace Richard Davenport, Mankato's president since 2002 who in August announced his upcoming retirement, prompting a nationwide search for his replacement. Mankato is expected to announce Davenport's replacement in March.

Jasinski would leave the University where he has spent most of his career in academia, serving in varying positions from 1986 to 2001, including as an associate provost, department chair and a faculty mem-

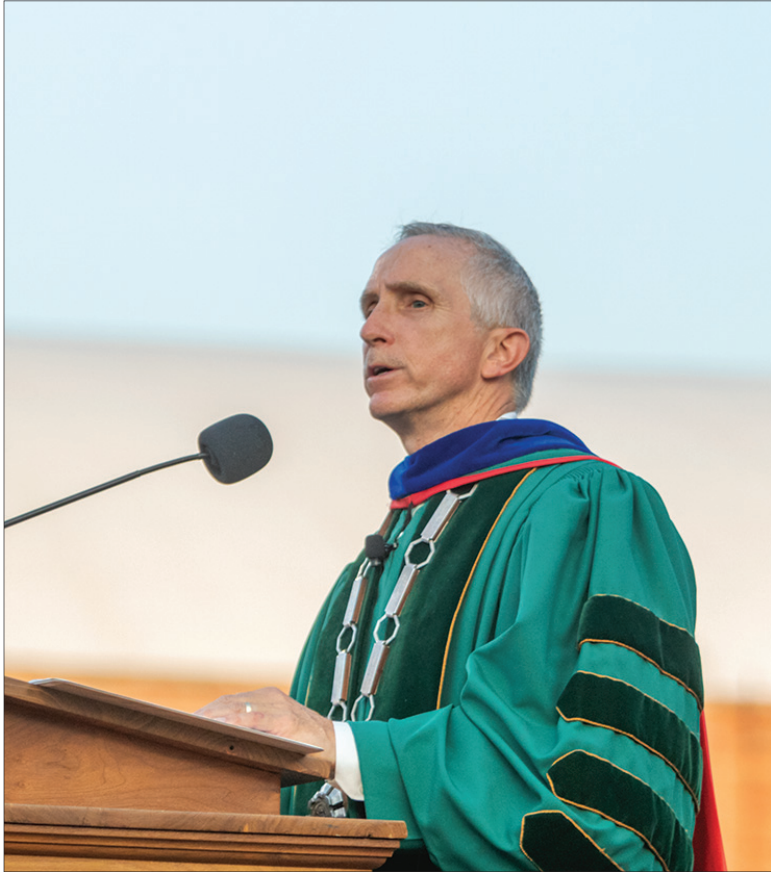
ber in Northwest's School of Communications and Mass Media.

Though he is not participating in media interviews while his candidacy for the presidential gig at Mankato is ongoing, Jasinski provided a written statement to The Missouriian via Northwest Communication Manager Mark Hornickel.

“It is appropriate for me to explore new horizons at this time as I am quite optimistic about where Northwest is at in its life cycle,” the statement reads in part. “We continue to ‘bring it’ and disrupt from a position of strength. ... Our core competencies of being safe, trusted, invested and resourceful are hallmarks, and our brand is as strong as ever.”

After expressing intense pride for Northwest in the written statement, Jasinski turned his attention toward his own future.

SEE JASINSKI | A4



Northwest President John Jasinski gives the commencement address at the University's graduation ceremony Aug. 8, 2020. Jasinski is a finalist to replace the outgoing president at Minnesota State University- Mankato.

Council to undergo implicit bias training

KENDRICK CALFEE News Editor | @calfee\_kc

In the past year, Maryville's City Council has heard the voices of many community members, mostly those staunchly against the face-covering ordinance or passionate about fixing local water quality.

This week, a new voice was elevated before the city's governmental body: the underrepresented Northwest student who has felt the weight of racism, implicit bias microaggressions, and moreover, felt anything but a member of the community.

This voice was reflected through Justin Mallett, Northwest's associate provost of Diversity and Inclusion. He attended the Feb. 8 City Council meeting following his mid-year equity report, which Northwest's Board of Regents heard for the first time Jan. 28.

Building upon this report, and following through with a plan of action to address racism and micro-aggressions in the greater Maryville area, Mallett began a conversation at this week's City Council meeting that led to a pledge of action on equity in the local community.

About halfway through the meeting, Mallett posed a question that each Maryville City Council member would answer.

“What does diversity and inclusion look like to you in the Maryville community?” Mallett asked.

There was an extended pause before Councilman Jason McDowell spoke first.

“Just an equal footing for everybody is the first thing that comes to mind for me,” McDowell said. “No matter if you're a lifelong resident, or you're an international student, or somewhere in between, that's what comes to my mind.”

“I would agree with Jason,” Mayor Ben Lipiec said. “We're a whole community ... able to work together and get the same accomplishment. Everybody's here to serve a purpose, and people can do what they want to do.”

Councilman Tye Parsons, a University employee, spoke next and said he felt diversity and inclusion in the community means under-represented students should feel as comfortable as everyone else and not feel they are treated differently.

WESLEY MILLER News Reporter | @wesleymiller360

Northwest's University Police Department investigated a terrorist threat made by a juvenile at Perrin Hall Jan. 22. The person who made the threat is not a Northwest student, and where they are officially from was not disclosed.

University Police Chief Clarence Green said a person located off campus called another person on campus when they made the threat. The juvenile threatened that they had a bomb.

UPD looked into the threat to determine its severity, Green said. Shortly after, the department determined it was not a major threat and that campus was safe. The investigation of this threat is closed.

“We were notified immediately and believed that the campus was not in danger,” Green said.

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# St. Francis to host annual gala online

*Student among those named as mental health ambassadors*

KENDRICK CALFEE  
News Editor | @calfee\_kc

The St. Francis Foundation modified its annual gala to a completely virtual experience this year in the midst of COVID-19. Guests will gather on a real-time live broadcast via a link sent to them with their ticket and enjoy a tropical vacation “stay in” from the comfort of their own homes.

The event will feature a mobile silent auction, gift baskets, food, live entertainment and guest speakers sharing a message of encouragement for those battling mental health issues. Beginning 7 p.m. Feb. 20, the gala aims to highlight the vast need of mental health resources in the local community through its “Hope Lives Here” theme.

Everyone who attends the event will receive a “stay in” kit which features a spirit bottle of choice, cocktail syrup accompaniments, spa essentials, a custom candle and other items. All proceeds from the event will go toward initiatives of adding different resources throughout the community.

Several people were chosen as mental health ambassadors with the St. Francis Foundation to raise awareness and advocate for those struggling. One of them was Northwest senior Cayla Vertreese, who shared her story with the foundation. She discussed her own experience in battling mental health issues and beginning a career of advocacy at Northwest.

“Mental health has become a huge passion of mine. ... I don’t think it’s been talked about very much at all, and with that, I want to be a voice for change,” Vertreese said in a promotional video for the gala.

Vertreese is the president of Active Minds, a campus organization focused on changing the conversation about mental health. The gala,



RACHEL ADAMSON | NW MISSOURIAN FILE  
In a Missourian file photo, Northwest senior Cayla Vertreese (far left) walks in the fall 2020 homecoming parade representing Active Minds. Vertreese is working with the St. Francis Foundation to help advocate for mental health.

she said, will help the community to have access to resources similar to those Northwest students have.

These resources have been attainable through a campus-wide conversation on the reality of mental health battles, Vertreese said. She is the youngest ambassador to ever work with the St. Francis Foundation. Her ambassador role includes connecting other people to the “Hope Lives Here” cause through outreach and spreading their message.

“I think education is one of the most important aspects when we are talking about mental health,” Vertreese said. “I feel like we’ve gotten to the point where we are seeing depression rates at the highest they’ve ever been before, anxiety rates at the highest they’ve ever been before, the highest suicide rates

you’ve ever seen before, and we are seeing this crisis in our country, that I think that’s attributed to a lack of mental health education.”

Talking about mental health has become a little more popular now, Vertreese said, because it’s gotten so bad. A proactive approach instead of simply reacting to the crisis is what Vertreese and St. Francis are looking to achieve in the local community.

With many mental health resources lacking in Maryville and throughout Nodaway County, funds raised in this year’s gala will aim to fill those gaps. The St. Francis Foundation is looking to add telehealth, more online counselors for schools, programming for social and emotional development and competency, emotional intelligence and suicide prevention training, among other initiatives.

Another mental health ambassador for this year’s gala is Nick Rucker. Rucker is a country music artist and U.S. army soldier who struggled with mental illness and alcohol use, and he now uses his story to encourage others. Music played a big role in Rucker’s daily recovery, along with support groups he gained in Omaha, Nebraska, where he now lives.

Rucker is a Nodaway County native who grew up 20 minutes north of Maryville. Remembering back to his younger years, the stigmas surrounding mental health were a problem in local communities.

But the recent push for more conversations by the St. Francis Foundation and its mental health ambassadors is a good sign, Rucker said. Knowing that palpable change is happening to provide mental

health resources in the greater Maryville area means people won’t feel as alone in their battles.

“This event is extremely important,” Rucker said. “Back when I lived there, the overall culture in Maryville was not stemmed around coming forward and saying, ‘Hey, I have a problem,’ it was more like, you kept it to yourself. You weren’t chastised, but you were, you know, different.”

“For me, it was the alcohol side of things,” Rucker said. “And in a town where it’s very college oriented — half the population is college kids — and just rural farming community where alcohol is kind of a big deal, why don’t we have a gameplan that makes people aware or better rather than, ‘Oh, so and so got their fifth DWI.’”

Rucker said this experience, though, is not limited to small towns across America; it is a nationwide crisis that is often uncomfortable to discuss but needs to happen.

“It’s like, what are we doing here, what’s the game plan moving forward or are we going to accept that this is just reality, or are we going to make it better?” Rucker said.

Rucker performed a virtual concert Jan. 23 in honor of the gala to continue the message of “Hope Lives Here” — a message Rucker, Vertreese and all the other ambassadors will continue to push ahead of the Feb. 20 gala.

Clarence Green, University police chief, encouraged the local community to contribute to this year’s St. Francis Foundation gala and spread mental health awareness.

“Our community has faced a substantial increase in mental health related incidents,” Green said in a Facebook video. “The Maryville community is a special place, and it deserves a united front on improving our mental health.”

Several other prominent community members, including Nodaway County Sheriff Randy Strong, have spoken up about mental health issues in the greater Maryville area.

This year’s gala offers 12 different sponsorship levels, ranging from \$350 to \$5,000, each including special benefits, one being a meal of choice included with the virtual event.

## GameStop set to close local store later this month

HAILEY MACH  
News Reporter | @haileymach98

Lately, there has been a lot of buzz about GameStop’s role in the stock market. Aside from the massive surge in the electronic company’s stocks, Maryville residents can bid their farewells to their local GameStop.

The location was nearing almost a decade of business in Maryville when the shop announced it was closing. Because many gamers have turned to digital copies of video games, the company has struggled with keeping its stores open. Additionally, the amount of foot traffic

in the stores has drastically declined due to customer concerns of COVID-19. In 2020 alone, between 400 and 450 GameStop locations have closed globally. More than 1,000 locations have closed since April 2019 with more to follow.

Store leader T. J. Parker said that he found out that the store was closing from a phone call with his boss mid-January. Parker noted that the next closest GameStops from the Maryville location are in northern Iowa and St. Joseph, Missouri.

“It’s going to be devastating. In my opinion, it’s just taking away the ability



ADDALYNN BRADBURY | NW MISSOURIAN  
Xavier Farley bends to look at a shelf of Playstation games in the local Maryville GameStop. The store will officially close its doors Feb. 21.

to shop elsewhere,” Parker said. “If anything video game related, you’re kind of forced to go to Walmart.”

Through the years, Parker has regularly seen customers traveling from as far as Tarkio, Missouri; King City, Missouri, and has even had people visiting the shop from Iowa. He said that when the corporation first looked into opening a store in Maryville, they realized the potential of a college town and decided it would be a great opportunity for business.

On a typical business day, Parker sees 25 to 35 customers stop in. Most of them, he said, don’t stop in for the video games, but for collectible figures. He said about half of the customers that he sees on a daily basis come in to check out the “Funko Pop” collectibles.

FULL STORY ONLINE:  
NWMISSOURINEWS.COM

## Students take first place in national ag contest

WESLEY MILLER  
News Reporter | @wesleymiller360

For the past five years, Northwest students have participated in an agriculture competition hosted by College Aggies Online. This past fall, students earned first place for their agriculture advocacy project for the group competition. As a prize, the agricultural sciences department was given a \$2,750 scholarship.

In the fall, for their project, Northwest’s agriculture advocacy class hosted a food and clothing drive Nov. 9-13 at Hy-Vee in Maryville, Missouri. A group of students from the agriculture advocacy class created the food drive to support the Nodaway County Ministry Center. While this food drive was not their only contribution, it was a big part of what helped them receive the national award; it gave them the most points out of their other events.

The agriculture advocacy class held other events throughout the fall semester such as scavenger hunts, information booths and a trivia night. Rod Barr, director of the agricultural sciences department for Northwest, said they have had guest speakers in the past, but they weren’t able to visit this year due to COVID-19.

Junior Sydni Akey said there was quite a bit of work that went into the food and clothing drive alone.

“It took a lot of hours outside of class to make the event work,” Akey said. “We did a lot of prep for flyers, handouts and even going and having meetings with Hy-Vee.”

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Thursday, February 18

Mr. Dan Smith

Plessy's Revenge: Colorblindness, Equal Protection, and the Reframing of Brown v. Board



IZIBEL DOBBS | NW MISSOURIAN  
Mike Stumbras gave a demonstration Feb. 2 in the Fire Arts building. His work will be shown through exhibitions, lectures and demonstrations.

# Guest artist displays craft for Northwest art students

KAILEE FORD  
News Reporter | @kailee\_ford

Ceramicist Mike Stumbras displayed his craftsmanship to Northwest students with an in-person demonstration of the process behind his work Feb. 1 and 2 in the Olive DeLuce Fine Arts Building.

Stumbras was invited to campus by assistant professor of ceramics Veronica Watkins. Along with his process demonstration, an exhibit of his work will be displayed in the gallery of the building throughout February.

Stumbras, a Chicago, Illinois, native, now lives in the Kansas City area where he works as the studio manager at 323 CLAY. He channels his inspiration of 18th and 19th century European production into ceramic vessels.

Stumbras has traveled and done residencies with different studios, including ones in New York and Colorado. He has also shown his work nationally and internationally.

“We were able to select an artist that would leave an impression on our students,” Watkins said.

Watkins said she had chosen Stumbras based off of his work and how he incorporated history with his own ideas. Watkins also expressed how his work shows a high level of technical accomplishment and understanding.

Stumbras was introduced to ceramics through a high school class but wasn’t interested in ceramics until he started using porcelain. It was then that realized he wanted to have a career in it. He went on to get his bach-

elor’s degree in studio arts and biology from Olaf College and his master’s degree in ceramics from Louisiana State University.

“I like the ability to express myself, especially after my dad died when I was young,” Stumbras said. “I needed a tangible outlet to express myself, and this was the perfect thing for that.”

Stumbras held demonstrations for students to come watch him work the process of making a piece. He showed them how he made different pieces such as a teapot and how to do surface work on the pots.

“I’m honored to be here and to increase the repertoire of some of the students here,” Stumbras said.

Along with the demonstration, Stumbras gave students advice. Students were able to show their work and get Stumbras’ thoughts, critiques and professional advice.

Stumbras described his process for making his pieces, all of which are thrown on a potter’s wheel, which helps shape the clay. There are many different techniques that can be used when working on pots, and Stumbras has been developing his current techniques for about eight years.

Stumbras held a Zoom lecture at 7 p.m. Feb. 1 to introduce himself to students. In the lecture he talked about his background and the things that influenced and inspired his work, including 18th century European art.

One 18th century artist that inspires Stumbras is Jean-Baptiste-Siméon Chardin, a French painter. He is most known for doing still-life paint-

ings and was a humble artist who, according to Stumbras, chose the lowest rung on the hierarchy of fine art.

Chardin had the skill to do higher level painting but chose still life, which Stumbras thought of as rebellious for the time. Stumbras said he feels like he has learned a deeper message from Chardin.

“Hearing about his work led me to realize that I didn’t have to be super productive as a measure of my value as an artist,” Stumbras said. “I can slow down.”

Stumbras said he likes to showcase deep and intense meanings in his work through what types of pots he makes such as urns and motifs like skulls.

“My favorite vessels to make are the ones that have a conceptual meaning to them by virtue of what they are,” Stumbras said.

To Stumbras, urns speak to death, and teapots speak to collectors items and use in communities. Some motifs he uses are laurel leaves that symbolize victory and skulls that symbolize death and futility.

Using symbols of death seems unnerving, but to Stumbras, they have a different meaning than what it shows on the surface.

“Skulls and urns are symbols of futility, but embracing it can be a liberating comfort rather than a terror.”

Watkins expressed her gratitude to Stumbras for coming to campus and looks forward to collaborating with him in the future.

*Sidney Lowry contributed to this report.*

# Nodaway County aims to reopen its jail by mid-February

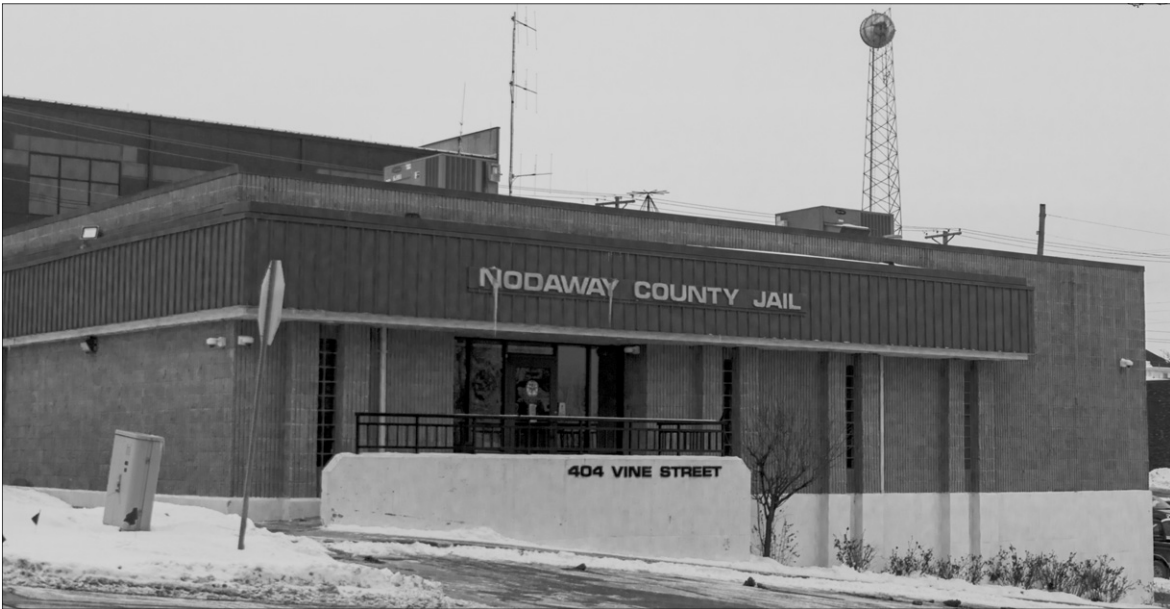
KENDRICK CALFEE  
News Editor | @calfee\_kc

For the past three weeks, county staff and local businesses have been repairing damage from a Jan. 14 fire that engulfed one of the jail’s cells, melting building infrastructure and causing smoke damage. The fire forced inmate evacuation and relocation.

The Missouri State Fire Marshal’s Office investigated the fire with the assistance of Detective Travis Cochenour of the Nodaway County Sheriff’s Office. According to the probable cause statement and report submitted to the circuit court, the fire was determined to be intentionally set.

Investigator Jacob Denum of the Missouri State Fire Marshal’s Office examined the scene and reviewed in-cell video footage of the south holding cell, where the fire originated.

In the footage, inmate Ethen Mark Bentley, 29, can be seen walking in and out of the shower stall just prior to the fire starting.



ADDALYNN BRADBURY | NW MISSOURIAN  
The Nodaway County Jail remains closed after a fire broke out in a jail cell Jan. 14. The fire forced 20 inmates to evacuate and relocate.

After the fire was started, Bentley is seen throwing a mattress and sheet from the top bunk in the cell into the shower stall. The

fire continues, growing to a larger point, when smoke begins to black out camera footage and the video ends.

Bentley was alone in the cell at the time of the fire, as a previous cellmate left prior to the fire starting. Based on this evidence, Denum

charged Bentley with one count of arson in the first degree.

“It is your affiant’s opinion that Ethen Mark Bentley started a fire in the cell he was solely occupying at the time,” the statement reads. “Mr. Bentley showed complete disregard for the other three inmates that were secured in close proximity to the fire.”

Bentley was being held in the Nodaway County Jail for an incident Jan. 6, when he was charged with two counts of first degree assault, one count of domestic assault, one count of first degree property damage and resisting a lawful stop.

Bentley has a court date for 9:30 a.m. March 1 on the count of arson.

The fire brought up discussions among county staff on how to make the jail safer for both inmates and staff. Since Strong has been in office, he has pushed for updates to the building which was built in the 1980’s.

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# CRIME LOG

for the week of Feb. 11

## Northwest Missouri State University Police Department

**Jan. 29**  
There is an open investigation for harassment at South Complex.

**Jan. 31**  
There are two closed investigations for liquor law violations at Franken Hall.

**Feb. 4**  
There is an open investigation for harassment at South Complex.

There is a closed investigation for a drug law offense on North College Drive.

**Feb. 6**  
There is an open investigation for theft at Lot 59.

**Feb. 7**  
There is an open investigation for theft at Lot 10.

**Feb. 8**  
There is an open investigation for theft at Lot 42.

## Maryville Department of Public Safety

**Jan. 29**  
There was an accident on the 1100 Block of East 2nd Street between **Amber C. Woosley**, and an unknown driver

**Jan. 30**  
There is an ongoing investigation for larceny on the 900 Block of North Main Street.

**Jan. 31**  
There was an accident on U.S. Highway 71 and U.S. Business Highway 71 between **Colton T. Nichols**, 19, of Turney, Missouri, and **Bryan M. Morrison**, 49, of Skidmore, Missouri. A citation was issued to Nichols for careless and imprudent driving.

**Feb. 3**  
A summons was issued to **Vasu Diwal**, 25, for not having a valid driver's license, speeding, failure to register a motor vehicle and failure to maintain financial responsibility on the 300 Block of South Buchanan Street.

**Feb. 4**  
A summons was issued to **Kristina M. Ward**, 23, of St. Joseph, Missouri for failure to appear at a criminal hearing on the 400 Block of North Market Street.

There is an ongoing investigation for an animal complaint on the 800 Block of East 3rd Street.



ADDALYNN BRADBURY | NW MISSOURIAN

**Maryville Fire Department Chief Phil Rickabaugh pulls a hose from a firetruck during routine checks. Maryville Public Safety is planning to split into separate police and fire departments.**

## MPS

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Rickabaugh and City Manager Greg McDaniel both explained that the change from a public safety division to separate departments has been an increasing occurrence for many public safety departments since the 9/11 terrorist attacks. The training for law enforcement and first responders has grown more specific to the job title.

McDaniel and Rickabaugh confirmed that in the '60s and '70s there was a shift in the industry that created the idea of public safety rather than having separate departments for fire and police. In

this combined system, police officers and firefighters were cross trained to do both jobs. Police officers were able to assist with fires, and firefighters could assist with law enforcement.

Since the events of 9/11, that system has been removed from many cities across the nation.

"Public safety departments, in general, are unique in communities of our size," McDaniel said. "And the public safety departments have become increasingly more uncommon since 9/11."

McDaniel noted that he and some individuals from the City Council had begun discussions to divide the police and fire division around

the time then Director of Maryville Public Safety Keith Wood retired in August 2020.

These discussions eventually led the City Council's decision to split the two divisions from one another, ending the era that has been the Maryville Public Safety system.

McDaniel said the funding for both departments comes from the city's general funds which are acquired through various taxes obtained within the city limits. These funds are normally split up for each division including fire, police, communications and Mozingo security to cover their budgets for the year. The budget for any of the departments will not be majorly affected.

## JASINSKI

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He hopes, of course, it lies in Mankato at the helm of a university with an enrollment of 15,000 students — a total more than double that of Northwest.

"Minnesota State, Mankato's culture and focus on student success are similar, and the institution is primed for, as they say up north, 'prodigious growth' as it, too, enjoys strong performance and is known as a sector leader," Jasinski said in the statement. "This is but a step in the process and, whatever the outcome, Denise (Jasinski) and I will continue our ongoing focus on uplifting Northwest and the communities we serve through a team-based environment. We'll do so with unceasing energy, passion and integrity."

While Mankato's website first named Jasinski as one of five finalists for the position, a fifth candidate, Sandra Haynes, withdrew her name from consideration.

Left in the running to replace Davenport are Jasinski; Edward

Inch, a provost and vice president at California State University-East Bay; Debra Larson, a provost and vice president at California State University-Chico; and Mrinal Mugdh Varma, the senior vice chancellor of Auburn University at Montgomery, Alabama. Jasinski stands out as the only finalist who currently serves as the president of a university.

As a part of its monthslong selection process, Mankato hosted open forums via Zoom for each of the finalists, giving staff and students a chance to hear from the candidates themselves. Jasinski appeared in his scheduled forum Feb. 9, prompting favorable coverage from The Mankato Free Press, which noted the "rapid-fire nature" of his online meeting.

Jasinski admitted to his limited knowledge of Mankato in the Zoom session, but still praised the university throughout his 45-minute appearance in front of staff and students, The Free Press reported.

"MSU-Mankato is a special place," Jasinski said at the forum, according to The Free Press. "You

get that vibe from the search committee; you get that from the Zoom sessions."

In both his statement to The Missourian and the public forum with Mankato stakeholders, Jasinski said part of his willingness to part ways with Northwest after more than 11 years comes from the success of the University's Forever Green fundraising campaign, which has garnered more than \$51 million in donations after quietly launching in 2014. The University made public its \$45 million fundraising goal in October 2019, when more than \$42 million had been raised.

If Jasinski does depart, he will leave the University in stable financial shape in the face of an ongoing global pandemic. The reality of Northwest's finances seem to be, in part, the reason the president is comfortable with moving on.

"We're in a strong position to hand off the reins," Jasinski said at Mankato's candidate forum, according to The Free Press. "It's a good time for family."

# Campus to honor Black History Month

SIDNEY LOWRY  
News Reporter I @sidney\_lowry

The Office of Diversity and Inclusion is hosting a series of events for Black History Month to celebrate the national heritage month at Northwest.

This year's national Black History Month theme surrounds the Black family and the representation and identity that comes with it. With five events being offered

throughout the month, the Office of Diversity and Inclusion is trying to educate everyone on campus and bring some students back to their roots.

The month kicked off Feb. 1 with the showing of "Soul Food," a movie from 1997 that encapsulates the problems and accomplishments that occur in come with any family. After showing the movie, Associate Provost of Diversity and Inclusion Justin Mallett and Coordinator of Diversity and Inclusion N'ninah Freelon led a group discussion on the movie, family dynamics and how that applies to their lives in Maryville.

"Your family always tends to come back together," Mallett said during the discussion. "Is every family perfect? No. No matter if times are hard, or if times are tough, we always come back together."

Freelon led two microaggression presentations Feb. 4 to educate students on the effects of microaggressions and offered a place for people to talk about their experiences. Senior Cayla Vertreese attended both events because she thinks it is important to attend them and be educated on specific cultures.

"My favorite part was the mosquito analogy video that she showed," Vertreese said. "I felt like it was a good analogy for those who don't directly experience microaggressions to understand how microaggressions really make an impact."

The rest of the month will consist of Black Jeopardy Feb. 11 to test students' knowledge of Black culture. The following week, there will be a Spades tournament to teach others on the traditionally Black family-oriented game Feb. 18.

FULL STORY ONLINE:  
**NWMISSOURI NEWS.COM**

## COVID-19

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He noted that the decrease in the number of vaccines delivered is based on availability from the state.

Blackford noted 1,021 residents at the Feb. 4 clinic were inoculated from the last shipment of vaccines and some extra doses that had not been claimed by caregivers at the hospital.

Despite the rate at which Mosaic - Maryville has been administering doses, it is hard to tell when Nodaway County will reach the level of herd immunity due to the constant change of vaccine availability.

Mosaic - Maryville received a little over 500 doses of vaccines for the first mass vaccination clinic and another 500 for the second clinic. Despite the consistency of the last two vaccine shipments, Blackford

said there is no way to tell for sure how many vaccines health officials will receive until they arrive.

In total, the mass vaccination clinics have allowed Mosaic - Maryville, the Nodaway County Health Department and the University to administer 1,700-1,800 doses to local residents.

"We made some minor enhancements that, I think, helped with throughput," Blackford said about the second mass clinic.

Some of the patients who have received vaccines are student employees through the University Police Department's Safe Ride Home Program.

Amanda Cullin, adviser of the Safe Ride Home Program and UPD lieutenant, said some of the student employees who work through UPD were offered the opportunity to get vaccinated.

"According to the state of Mis-

souri, it's available to law enforcement departments, and all of our students and staff were offered the option — it wasn't required — to get vaccinated," Cullin said.

Cullin said she was not sure how many student employees for Safe Ride had received a vaccine since the process was voluntary. She said the students will go through the same preregistration process as the rest of the community.

Blackford noted the automated preregistration system was launched at 8 p.m. Feb. 8 on Mosaic - Maryville's Facebook page.

In a Facebook post, the hospital asked residents to preregister through a link. The link takes residents to Mosaic Life Care's website where residents looking to register for a COVID-19 vaccination can select their vaccination location and start the registration process.



ADDALYNN BRADBURY | NW MISSOURIAN

**Diane Stevenson undergoes her first dose of the Pfizer COVID-19 vaccine at the mass vaccination clinic Feb. 4 in the Carl and Cheryl Hughes Fieldhouse. More than 2,800 Nodaway County residents have received their first dose of the COVID-19 vaccine.**

FOR THE CULTURE:

# Interracial couples have extra hurdles

**CORBIN SMITH**  
Columnist  
@curly\_corbs



*Editor’s note: As a celebration and remembrance for Black History Month, Corbin Smith will be producing a For The Culture column every week of the month of February.*

Some of the most beautiful things in the world are the result of a mixture of colors. Sunsets, paintings, nature, and for me, neapolitan ice cream. However, when it comes to the mixture of skin colors in relationships, the line between beauty and beast becomes a little muddled.

The United States legalized interracial relationships in 1967 when the Supreme Court ruled the banning of such marriages unconstitutional in *Loving v. Virginia*. It’s ridiculous that some people carry on the idea that being part of an interracial relationship is a corruption of character.

Being raised by my Black father and half-white, half-Hispanic mother, I’ve never given a second thought to interracial relationships. My father grew up in the predominantly Black city of St. Louis while my mother grew up 34 miles northeast of Maryville, where her father was the most color the town had witnessed. My parents are the most loving people I know, with no corruption due to their relationship.

As I became old enough to take relationships seriously, I was quickly labeled the “white girls only” guy because, at the time, I was dating a white girl.

There’s this idea that dating outside of your race means you find your own culture unattractive, that somehow love can’t exist unless you find somebody who shares your generational trauma.

The problem doesn’t just stem from the idea that interracial couples are bad, but from people believing that they’re more desirable. There is a horrifying trend of Black men deeming white women more attractive, simply because they’re not Black.

It’s the same premise as cultural appropriation or just blatant racism. I’ve heard from multiple Black men that Black women have too much of an attitude to be attractive or that they just aren’t as physically appealing as white women. These unwarranted claims of an unattractive nature creates a negative image of Black women.

Similarly, Black men can become the object of fetishism. Time after time, I’ve heard white women claim their attraction to Black men, but only emphasize the idea of having mixed babies with light eyes and loose curls.

All of these are things I’ve seen in cisgender, heterosexual, interracial relationships from the Black man’s perspective. LG-BTQ+ relationships, as well as women in interracial relationships, have undoubtedly countless other stereotypes and obstacles to overcome.

There’s been so much harm done to the Black community, it’s just hard to fully buy into white people truly giving love and understanding to a person of color.

Nobody should ever feel like they shouldn’t love who they want. For a lot of people, it’s just hard to accept, but is that anything new in America?



CHRIS YOUNG | NW MISSOURIAN

OUR VIEW:

# Snow day decisions create confusion, inconsistency

The same strange ritual begins every time Maryville has snow in the forecast. First, students and faculty alike will begin to talk about it with cautious optimism. The end of classes prior to the inclement weather will be spent casting hopeful predictions for class cancellations. Next, people will take to Twitter using the same 10 or 15 variations of accusing or begging the Northwest University Police Department’s account to grant them a snow day, as if UPD is the only group that makes the decision.

Finally, there will either be jubilation or dismay as many wake up the next morning and frantically check their email and Twitter to see if they can go back to bed or not. If they can, everyone, except the poor people that still have to go to work, breathes a sigh of relief. If not, some very ungrateful few will take to the internet to accuse UPD of everything from recklessness to malice for not canceling class, again as if UPD is the sole decider.

This year, however, the dalliance is a little different because of COVID-19 and Zoom.

On only the third day of classes this semester, Northwest had an official snow day, sort of. Many students awoke to the notification that their morning classes had been moved to Zoom and that

all other classes for the rest of the day would be conducted virtually. Then, for many, an inexact amount of time later they were told by faculty that all classes were canceled. Some students had already attended classes, while others hadn’t. The issue was not the one a child — or person on Twitter angry at UPD — would raise; it wasn’t the issue of fairness. It was the issue of inconsistency.

Mere weeks later a similar situation occurred with similar weather. The University decided to hold all “on-ground” classes until 11 a.m. virtually. The confusing pseudo-military language aside, the University seemed to reverse recent precedent and decide to proceed with classes, and particularly virtual classes, early on in the day.

The problem with this action is simple. What if a student lives more than 10 minutes away from campus? Some professors are counting in-person attendance unless there is University documentation that says a student cannot attend in person. So are students supposed to race to campus in the minuscule 10-minute gap between classes? Or are they supposed to brave the conditions before they were deemed safe so they can be on campus early?

Fast forward to this week, where temperatures are expected to hover around

zero, and snow and ice are caked on nearly every street. Many professors elected to hold Zoom classes Feb. 8 and not brave conditions, yet the same problem could still remain. Streets just blocks from campus remained relatively untouched, yet many students were forced to hustle to campus to attend class. There was no cohesion in faculty and University decision-making.

The process to decide whether there should be a snow day is a rather rigorous one. There is a drawn-out document that calls for specific officials to meet with others and for students to be notified at certain times. University Police Chief Dr. Clarence Green said in an email that he believes students will have traditional snow days even in this virtual landscape.

Obviously, each day will be a unique decision in regard to cancellation and delays, but in the past, there was always a sense of cohesion. While many may have not agreed with the decision to cancel or proceed with classes, there was at least a certain familiarity with what would happen. Virtual classes and recent decisions have thrown that familiarity into a deep snowdrift.

The current model of shifting from online to in-person in just ten minutes isn’t working. There’s no consistency, except for the angry Twitter people.

YOUR VIEW:

Do you think Northwest will ever have another traditional snow day? Why or why not?

**EMILEE HALEY**  
Junior  
Elementary and  
Special Education



“No, I believe it’s gonna be all over Zoom. We will have snow days, but teachers are going to do them all over Zoom no matter the weather.”

**LATORRIE JOHNSON**  
Junior  
Economics



“Probably not. I just think with Zoom it gives us an opportunity to continue our learning even with the weather being inclement and the forecasts showing snow. I just think the school will make us do a Zoom to keep up with classes.”

**SAI MANIDEEP ALLU**  
Graduate Student  
Computer Science



“Yeah, because I was seeing from the last few days the temperature was going really low, and so I think they will have a real snow day without Zoom classes.”

THE STROLLER:

# Your Bearcat wants baby only sections

Remember the good old days when people could smoke cigarettes in restaurants? And the even better days when they forced smoking sections into said restaurants so smokers could sip their chemical cocktails without disturbing the non-smokers? Well, I think this same concept should be implemented in restaurants today, except instead of non-smoking sections, there should be no-baby sections.

What do babies and cigarettes have in common? They’re a dis-

turbance to others, they smell and they take years off your life. Customers mentally prepare themselves for their restaurant experience to be slightly tainted the minute they are seated near a baby, much like one would feel if seated near someone smoking. For these reasons, many people without babies, such as myself, would rather enjoy a meal in a separate place, free from the contamination of babies.

Everyone who goes out to restaurants has been the victim of a

nearby screaming baby disrupting the peace at least once in their lives. But I think circumstances could be different.

Imagine walking into a restaurant, one comparable to a hospital delivery wing, say, Texas Roadhouse.

You are greeted with a smile and asked, “Babies or no babies?” “No babies,” you respond proudly.

As you cross the restaurant, you sneak a glance at the “Babies” section — chaos. A server

dodges oversized strollers, rushing to replace spilled drinks, while desperate mothers attempt to calm their screaming miracles.

Another server directs you to a table in a separate room, surrounded by adults speaking in normal tones. An entire meal goes by, and there is no baby to be seen or heard. It would be glorious.

*The Stroller has been a tradition since 1918 and does not reflect the views of The Northwest Missourian.*

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MIAA  
CONTINUED FROM A8

Along with the fiscal responsibility that it requires to rent Municipal Auditorium for five days, the decision was also made due to the MIAA’s attempt to have a better experience for the student-athletes. “I think for the conference tournament, it being such a great experience — as a student-athlete I can speak to, and as a coach I can speak to, the administrator I can speak to — being in there in that big, vast space with no fans would not be the

experience that we that we necessarily want,” Peterson said. Northwest is one of the closest MIAA schools to Kansas City. That, coupled with the fact that the Northwest men have won five consecutive conference tournament championships, creates a big draw of Bearcat fans to the arena. The biggest change for the men, Northwest coach Ben McCollum said, will be the reduced size of the tournament’s field. “I like an expanded field,” McCollum said. “I just think it makes it more fun for the conference tournament.

I think this year I completely understand why it’s eight teams.” For Austin Meyer and the Northwest women, the possibility of a quick turnaround in the tournament isn’t anything they haven’t dealt with all season. “This year, with all of the craziness anyways with COVID and quarantines and all of the adjusting stuff that we’ve had to do, we’ve probably prepped ourselves enough for it that if we’re fortunate enough to get to the tournament, we’ll be ready to go play no matter where we’re going,” Meyer said.

BASEBALL, SOFTBALL CANCEL

Northwest Athletics announced Feb. 10 that Northwest baseball was canceling its trip to Durant, Oklahoma, to open the season due to cold temperatures. Prior to that, Athletics announced that Northwest softball rescheduled its matchups for this weekend due to cold temperatures as well.

Baseball is now set to start its 2021 season Feb. 20 against Minot State in Pittsburg, Kansas, as part of the Pittsburg State Invitational. Softball will start its season Feb. 21 against Missouri S&T in Rolla, Missouri. It’ll be softball’s first game since March 8.



Northwest junior guard Trevor Hudgins fights through contact while trying to make a layup in the Bearcats’ 79-56 win over Missouri Western Feb. 9 in St. Joseph, Missouri. Hudgins tallied 16 points and six assists against Western.

WESTERN  
CONTINUED FROM A8

“Our energy was probably 100 times better than it was on Saturday,” Hawkins said. “Other than that, we didn’t change anything; we just didn’t play hard Saturday. We came out today with the energy and the fight we normally have.” The Bearcats’ dominance was perhaps, in part, due to the absence of Western’s first-year coach Will Martin, who was held from attending the contest because of COVID-19 protocols. “It’s actually kind of scary,” McCollum said about a situation in which his team would be without him. “Those situations, whenever you show up and the other team doesn’t have their best player or, in this case, their head coach, it’s a scary situation. ... They’re not going to make excuses for it. They’re going to keep grinding and keep fighting.” McCollum’s praise for his team came on the defensive end of the court, where Northwest limited Western to shoot 34.5% from the field, including 33% from deep, while holding the Griffons to zero points in the first five minutes of

the contest. Amid reminiscing on the win against Western — a win that moved his all-time record against the Griffons to 24-2 — McCollum noted the defensive dominance the Bearcats had in their 80-37 win over Central Missouri Jan. 30. The Bearcats held the Mules to 32% from the field in that game. It’s one of the best defensive performances from the Bearcats all season, statistically. It’s not a surprise to McCollum, though, as he preaches defense more than anything. During his tenure with the program, the Bearcats are 99-3 when they hold opponents to less than 60 points, a model that McCollum would like to follow for the rest of the season. The Bearcats will get a chance to build on their dominant win over Western Feb. 11 and 13, when Pitt State and Missouri Southern will travel to Maryville in an attempt to dethrone the top team in the MIAA. “I mean, that’s what we should do,” McCollum said of the Bearcats’ defensive efforts, which forced the Griffons to commit nine turnovers. “It’s not necessarily that good, but ... If you’re intense and get after it like that, that’s what happens.”



Northwest freshman Lauryn Hill competes in the women’s long jump Feb. 5 at the Bearcat Open in the Carl and Cheryl Hughes Fieldhouse. Hill placed third in her event, while Northwest sophomore Jada Shanklin placed first.

TRACK  
CONTINUED FROM A8

Like Norris, the women’s medley team, which consisted of junior Caroline Cunningham, sophomores Delanie Dykes and Tiffany Hughey and freshman Bailey Blake, broke their own previously set school record with a time of 11 minutes, 51 seconds and 82 milliseconds. The previous record stood for only two weeks after being set at the Northwest Open Jan. 22-23. “Breaking a record twice is a real testament to the work and talent we currently have on the team,” Cunningham said. “Going forward, it’s a confidence booster for sure. We know that we can go out there and put ourselves into a good position and finish well. It’s all about trusting the coaches and trusting the process.” Hughey said everyone was pumped to shave off nine more seconds compared to the original record set two weeks prior and that this performance will help for their first away meet Feb. 13 at Washburn University. “I think after running the time we did, everyone will be excited to run just as hard or harder in a completely different environment,” Hughey said. Dykes said it felt amazing to lower the school record, previously set in 2013 before the 2021 season, by nearly 28 seconds since the start of the season. “I think it shows that we are still working and that we are only going

to get better and better as the season goes on,” Dykes said. The men’s 4x400-meter relay team set a new school record as well with a time of 3 minutes, 10 seconds and 37 milliseconds. The athletes on this record-breaking team were senior Caelon Harkney, sophomore Gavyn Monday and juniors R.J. Williams and Omar Austin. Austin, who was a part of the relay team that broke the record last season, said it felt good watching the people he’s trained with all year put their best effort out there for each other. “This was my first 400 in a year coming off of a quad injury, so I felt like I made a good return,” Austin said. “I stayed smooth and trusted my body more. I’m going to get my body more in tune for the championships coming up.” Coach Brandon Masters said that the Bearcats haven’t reached their full potential yet, noting that the performances throughout the first month of the season are just a preview of what’s to come for the program during the upcoming weeks. “The things we did today just shows me the team really has quite the potential to do something this year,” Masters said. “It’s really neat to watch.” Despite hosting four consecutive meets, Masters said he doesn’t have any doubts about his team for their first away meet. “They’re so excited to take a

trip and go someplace else,” Masters said. Washburn is experiencing the same luxury Northwest has, with the Ichabod Invitational Feb. 13 set to be the sixth consecutive meet for the Ichabods in their home new facility. “The track will be a little different. The competition will be raised, and each week we have gotten better,” Hughey said. Dykes said she is ready to go somewhere else and show more people who they are and the success they’ve been having this season. Masters said that even though it’s great being at home, his team is ready to go to a new track, especially Washburn’s brand new indoor facility, which opened in November. This will be the same track Northwest will go to for the conference meet Feb. 27-28. “Since conference is also at Washburn, it will be good to get a feel for the track and hopefully help get us mentally ready for conference,” Dykes said. Even with success coming every week for Northwest’s track team, whether it be national ranks, school records, personal records or hitting Division II provisional marks, Masters said he isn’t distracted and doesn’t think the athletes are either. He said he talked to them about where he thinks they are as a team, so they’re prepared to deal with weekly success. Austin reiterated Master’s point that the athletes aren’t distracted. “I stick to my normal day routine, and I stay focused because I know what my end goal is,” Austin said. Currently only Colorado School of Mines, Grand Valley State, Ashland, and West Texas A&M rank above the men’s team. When they head to Topeka, Kansas, Feb. 13 for the Ichabod Invitational, they’ll be looking to make a jump toward the No. 1 spot in the country. “Rankings change every week,” Masters said. “We’ll keep climbing them, I believe.”

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Northwest women’s basketball junior guard Jaelyn Haggard celebrates after making a 3-pointer during the Bearcats’ 63-49 win over Missouri Western Feb. 6 in Bearcat Arena. The women made 17 threes against the Griffons.

# Women hope to continue streak

**CALVIN SILVERS**  
Sports Reporter | @CalvinSilvers

As Missouri Western entered Bearcat Arena Feb. 6, the Northwest women’s basketball team looked to eliminate another obstacle off its list: capturing back-to-back wins against the Griffons, a feat that hasn’t been accomplished since 2010.

It only took a season-high 17 3-pointers — on a program record of 41 attempts in a contest — where six different Bearcats made at least two 3-pointers, leading Northwest to a 63-43 triumph, moving the team to 6-9 on the season.

“I think the win does a lot. We talk about how tough of a league this is. Anytime you can beat a team twice is a good thing,” Northwest coach Austin Meyer said. “For us, it was a team we hadn’t beaten twice in a season in a decade. That’s a big deal, and hopefully, that gives us confidence moving forward.”

The Bearcats now turn their attention to another slate of three games in five days, which begins Feb. 11 when Pittsburg State (11-6) travels to Bearcat Arena.

The two teams have met once this season Jan. 2, when the Gorillas had all starters scoring 6 points or more in the first half. The efficient offensive production paved the way for an 80-50 Pitt State victory.

Pitt State point guard Kaylee Damitz is the engine behind the Gorilla team. Damitz comes into the matchup averaging 17 points, six rebounds and two steals. Junior guard Tristan Gegg is the deep threat specialist, leading the team in 3-pointers made. If the Bearcats let Gegg find her rhythm, there’s no promise she’ll let her foot off the gas.

“We have to be sound and do what we do from a defensive system standpoint. We’ve done a pretty good job all year of taking shooters away and not letting high percentage shooters get shots,” Meyer said. “When there’s multiple shooters on the floor, which Pitt has, you have to stay home more on the help side. It puts a lot more pressure on your on-ball defense to be good.”

Averaging more than 70 points a game, the Gorillas will look to pick up the pace against the Bearcats who tend to slow the game down. The key focus will be

looking to stop the dribble-drive offense. Northwest will have to take away angles while staying in front of defenders.

The Gorillas have won 16 straight against the Bearcats, a streak that began Dec. 7, 2011, in Maryville. While Northwest has been on the losing side of the series as of late, the players tend not to focus on it.

“In games like this, you can’t look at the past, your record or the statistics. It’s all about who shows up to play and outworks the other team on that night,” senior guard Jaelyn Haggard said. “We’ve seen in this conference that anyone can beat anyone, regardless of what the records show. It’s who throws the first punch and keeps swinging.”

Northwest will then have a one-day break before Missouri Southern comes to visit on senior day Feb. 13. This will be the second contest between the two teams in 10 days. Northwest found an offensive groove in the first meeting, winning 63-46.

The Bearcats will look to exploit mismatches against the Lions, which was a key in building the lead the first go around. Freshman guard Molly Hartnett

UP NEXT

NW v Pitt State

5:30 p.m. Feb. 11

Bearcat Arena

will be counted on to take advantage of the mismatches, as she led the Bearcats with 19 points against Southern.

“We can kind of pick out switches we want and then kind of let them go to work,” Meyer said. “We can then see if Southern doubles, then you can play off of that, or you just attack and eventually get into your halfcourt offense.”

Meyer will look to incorporate a smaller shooting lineup to force 6-foot-3-inch sophomore center Madi Stokes to guard the perimeter, opening the paint for dribble drives. Stokes averages 10 points, 11 rebounds and two blocks.

Southern sits at the eighth seed in the MIAA, the cutoff for making the conference tournament. The Bearcats fall one spot below the Lions at nine, hoping to jump them in the standings with a win Saturday.

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# MHS girls aim for MEC title down stretch

CORBIN SMITH

Sports Reporter | @curly\_corbs

With a little more than two weeks until the MSH-SAA Class 4 District 16 Tournament, Maryville girls basketball (16-1) is looking to finish the season with its double-digit win streak intact. Sitting atop the MEC at 6-0, the Spoofohounds also prepare to retain their status as queens of the conference from last season.

After taking an abbreviated break from the team, coach Quentin Albrecht said he was ready to get back to work.

“We want to make sure that everybody, including myself, is healthy and ready to go,” Albrecht said. “The next few games are all conference games, and these are really important games for us. If we can manage to get through the next few games, we can win a conference championship, so that’s what we want to focus on.”

Maryville’s remaining opponents include familiar faces from earlier in the season. Before the girls can focus on the district tournament, they must play Benton (8-5), Cameron (15-5), Savannah (10-7) and Chillicothe (14-4).

Each of the teams listed have fallen to the 'Hounds this season, so the confidence is already instilled in Albrecht.

“We know we can compete with these teams because we’ve played and defeated them,” Albrecht said. “We know we can compete. We know we can beat ‘em, but you have to show up every day when you’re playing in the MEC. If you don’t bring your A-game, you’ll be in trouble.”

Senior guard Serena Sundell weighed the pros and cons of playing teams for a second time this season and determined that neither list should matter to her team.

“There will be negatives and positives, but it’ll be good for us because we knew their style of play,” Sundell said. “They’re going to know our offense and try to stop us, but I think we’re going to be good enough to execute no matter how they try to stop us.”

On both ends of the court, the Spoofohounds have been solid in the first bouts with their remaining foes. They’ve outscored these teams by an average of 20 points. Benton was the closest team to beating Maryville and still lost by 12 points.

Despite its previous success against MEC rivals, Maryville is focused on each game and not looking past any opponent.

UP NEXT

MHS @ Benton

7 p.m. Feb. 11

St. Joseph, Missouri

“We’re really trying to stay focused on one game at a time,” Sundell said. “There’s nothing we can do for the district tournament right now. What we need to do is get that goal of being conference champions. If we can stay present for each game and not look too far ahead, I think we’re going to be the most successful.”

Albrecht is hoping to keep the same focus even though these conference rival games come with added adrenaline and emotion. He gives high praise to the girls’ ability to play both sides of the court, and he knows that makes the team hard to beat.

With their matchup with Chillicothe postponed to Feb. 25, the 'Hounds will be in St. Joseph and Savannah, Missouri, for two of its last four games. However, a lack of home court advantage hasn’t hindered them, as they’ve won each of their 11 road games this season.

Sundell is enthusiastic about playing the same team two or three times in a season but is quick to acknowledge how difficult it could get. With all the success the Spoofohounds have encountered this season, she’s refusing to let it phase them.

# 20

The 'Hounds have beat their remaining teams by an average of 20 points.

“We don’t want to come out too confident,” Sundell said. “Everyone has been in a position where games go back and forth, so we’re going to come out and stay humble, work hard and earn what we can get.”

With every game growing in importance to Albrecht, he is wanting the girls to take each of them as a learning process. If they learn from each game, he’s very confident that Maryville will be the 2021 Midland Empire Conference Champions.

“We just know that we need to play our game, take care of our business and let the chips fall where they may,” Albrecht said.

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Sweater weather  
NW baseball, softball cancel  
openers due to cold weather.  
see A6

In the hunt  
NW women search for MIAA  
Tourney spot amid hot streak.  
see A7



Northwest men's basketball senior forward Ryan Hawkins fights through the defense for a layup during the Bearcats' 79-56 win over Missouri Western Feb. 9 in St. Joseph, Missouri. The victory marked the 18th straight against the Griffons.

# Northwest dominates rival Western. Again.

JON WALKER  
Sports Editor | @ByJonWalker

ST. JOSEPH, Mo. — Three days prior to Northwest men's basketball hitting the road to take on Missouri Western Feb. 9, the Bearcats survived a scare from the Griffons, a loss that Northwest eventually avoided with a 70-64 win Feb. 6 in Bearcat Arena.

The Bearcats' 17th consecutive win against the Griffons personified the intensity of what a rivalry should be, an intense brawl between two programs during a game that includes one team experiencing the highest of highs and the other experiencing the lowest of lows.

The Bearcats' 18th consecutive win against the Griffons personified the rivalry between the two programs: a lopsided affair, one in which No. 3 Northwest (15-1) secured a 79-56 win over Western (8-7).

"We executed defensively; we actually tried, gave some effort," Northwest coach Ben McCollum



said. "I mean, we tried at our place. We just didn't give that elite effort, and I thought tonight we did."

During the first meeting between the two programs, Northwest senior forward Ryan Hawkins tallied 18 points and nine rebounds while shooting 40%. At halftime of the second meeting, Hawkins had 19 points and eight boards.

The Atlantic, Iowa, native got a layup to go with 8 minutes and 50 seconds left in the first half, a bucket that gave him 9 points on the night, and a bucket that pushed him by David Alvey for No. 3 on the program's all-time scoring list.

"I had no idea," Hawkins said of the accolade. "But I think it means I've been here too long."

Hawkins eventually finished the game with 34 points, tying his season-high (Dec. 5, Lincoln) and marking the 10th time in his collegiate career he's scored at least 30 points, including the fourth this season.

He added 13 rebounds against the Griffons, too, marking the 24th time the senior has recorded a double-double.

## UP NEXT

NW v Pitt State  
7:30 p.m. Feb. 11  
Bearcat Arena

"I mean, he's a good player," McCollum said through a laugh. "He's a good kid."

Hawkins' performance was reflective of the contest for the Bearcats — a domination courtesy of easy scoring opportunities and stifling defense.

Although Northwest led 34-16 at the break, Western opened the second half with a 10-2 run before junior guard Trevor Hudgins hit a layup to silence Western's crowd.

The Griffons weren't going to back down, but neither were the Bearcats. That run didn't matter, as Northwest still found a way to pull away — something the 'Cats weren't able to do until the final minute of the first matchup between the two.

SEE WESTERN | A6

# MIAA Tourney changes format for 2021

JON WALKER  
Sports Editor | @ByJonWalker



The MIAA announced Jan. 21 that the conference's post-season tournament format will change, narrowing the field from 10 to eight teams this March amid the ongoing pandemic.

Fans around the league won't be able to travel to Kansas City, Missouri, to watch their team play, as the release also stated the MIAA Tournament will not be held at Municipal Auditorium due to COVID-19 restrictions inside of the city limits.

"For us to host it there probably would have been financially irresponsible to rent that facility and not have fans come in and try to offset those costs," Northwest Director of Athletics Andy Peterson said. "So, that's pretty much the justification for where it boiled down, was just the cost if we weren't able to have fans and stuff in there, which we completely understand. Adapt and overcome."

The quarterfinals of the MIAA Tournament will be on the campus site of the higher seed March 3, following a traditional tournament format.

The MIAA isn't carrying that format throughout the semifinals and championship, however, making the highest remaining seed after the quarterfinals the host campus for the last two rounds March 5-7.

The Northwest men, the No. 1 team in the MIAA at time of publication, would host their first-round matchup with the No. 8 seed. Should the Bearcats win that game, Maryville would become the host site for the men's semifinals and championship March 5-6.

The women's quarterfinals will also take place March 3, but the semifinals and championship will be played March 6-7.

"If you do have a team that is in both tournaments, and you've got them playing simultaneously at the same time on Friday or Saturday, it could be an issue," Peterson said about the weekend slate of games being staggered. "It also kind of gives the spotlight to the women on Sunday to have a championship by themselves, which is what we've always done at Municipal."

SEE MIAA | A6

# Success follows track through home schedule

WESLEY MILLER  
Sports Reporter | @wesleymiller360

The last meet at the Carl and Cheryl Hughes Fieldhouse this season, the fourth in as many weeks, brought as much success for Northwest track and field as the first three.

Northwest track and field opened the season by hosting four consecutive meets, starting Jan. 16 with the Mel Tjeerdsma Classic and ending with the Bearcat Open last weekend. Prior to the Feb. 5-6 meet, Northwest track and field's men were ranked No. 6 in the country and the women were ranked No. 15 by the U.S. Track and Field and Cross Country Coaches Association.

Before the beginning of the meet Feb. 5, Northwest track athletes had broken four school records and hit Division II provisional marks 15 times. At the Bearcat Open, three more North-



## UP NEXT

NW @ Ichabod Invitational  
Feb. 13  
Topeka, Kansas

west school records were broken, and three athletes hit national qualifying times in their respective events. After the Bearcat Open, the men's team is ranked 5th in the nation, and the women's team is now ranked 20th.

Junior Jake Norris, who has now been a part of three record-breaking performances this season, broke Northwest's record for the men's one-mile run Feb. 6 with a time of 4 minutes, 7 seconds and 68 milliseconds, a record which was previously set by Norris himself in the first meet of the 2021 season. This time was also good enough to hit the Division II provisional mark.

SEE TRACK | A6



Northwest senior Brock Swindler jumps into a sandpit at the Bearcat Open hosted in the Hughes Fieldhouse Feb. 5. The Northwest track and field team is set to compete in the Washburn Ichabod Invitational in Topeka, Kansas, Feb. 13.

IZIBEL DOBBS | NW MISSOURIAN